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## CRITICAL NOTICES.

*Quellenschriften zur Geschichte des Unterrichts und der Erziehung bei den deutschen Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf Mendelssohn,*  
von Dr. M. GÜDEMANN. (Berlin, 1891.)

AFTER having completed in four parts the history of Jewish education and learning in Spain, Italy and Germany in the fullest sense, Dr. Güdemann gives in the present volume the original documents concerning education amongst the German Jews. The author rightly says in his preface, that it is impossible for one man to collect all sentences and sayings referring to Jewish education which are scattered throughout a great number of works and treatises ; he has therefore confined himself to special chapters and monographs on the subject. The German-speaking Jews (settled, in consequence of various exiles and of voluntary emigration, in Slavonic-speaking countries, Hungary, Turkey, and especially in Palestine, and in Upper Italy) did not, with but few exceptions, compose special ethical books, as their brethren did in Spain and Portugal, and later on (after having been exiled from these countries) in Morocco, Tunis, Algeria, Salonica, Constantinople, Smyrna and other parts of the East. The exceptions are enumerated and extracts are given from them by our author, together with "wills," left by learned rabbis, and memorials of the various congregations, in which education is touched on by various statutes made by a committee of the heads of the community. These various documents are written in Rabbinical Hebrew, and also often in the German jargon used dialectically by the scattered Jews in Germany and in other countries where the emigrants kept to the German speech. Thus these documents have also some philological value, although not to such an extent as the French glosses found in the commentaries of Rashi and his successors.

Although the central point of education with the Jews in the middle ages was chiefly the interpretation of the Bible and the investigation of the Talmud, the Midrash and the works on Halakhah, the Jews in Spain began early to cultivate Arabic, and thus became acquainted with Greek philosophy through the medium of Averroes, with medicine through Avicenna, with mathematics and astronomy through many Arabic authors who studied and commented on

Ptolemy in the first instance, and later on wrote also original works. Consequently the Spanish Jews knew the Aristotelian ethics, and had some acquaintance with Plato; and they got hold of a pseudo-Aristotelian book of moral sayings. The Hebrew translations of these Arabic works reached Provence and Italy, in which countries many copies were made. Perhaps some of these were known in Northern France, England and Germany, where the Jews it seems, were averse to studying anything else but casuistical matter, Kabbalah, and rarely grammar. No translations from the Latin or French made in these countries are known if we except Berechiah Naqdan and Hagnus; the former wrote two ethical books, of which one is in the form of fables, as early as 1190.

Thus whilst Spanish authors recommend the study of philosophical and ethical works simultaneously with that of the Bible and the Talmud, the French and German writers cared exclusively for Bible, Talmud and Kabbalah, so far as is shown by the documents published by Dr. Güdemann. In the sixteenth century Moses Premisl (p. 53), although with a little reserve, opposes the study of "Greek learning," viz., of Aristotle, Galen, and others. How the Kabbalah was universally taught we can see from the quotations given from a book of the celebrated R. Moses Isserls and R. Abraham Hayyim (seventeenth century). A mention of the study of grammar as being the basis of the study of law, we find in Sabbetai of Przemisl's writings (sixteenth-seventeenth century). Indeed, what a poor list of titles of philosophical, mathematical, and astronomical works we find in the list of R. Manoah Hendel (sixteenth-seventeenth century)! It is true he mentions amongst the works he recommends for study the arithmetical books of Elijah Mizrahi and Euclid, as well as astronomical works, but this only for the understanding of the calendar.

But the essence of the moral is in all the writings quoted and extracted by Dr. Güdemann, the love of one's neighbour, as already recommended by the great Hillel. They touch upon many abuses amongst their brethren, which are now the weapons of the anti-Semites. "Whoever," it is said amongst other moral sentences in the *Book of the Pious* (thirteenth century), "whoever lends money on percentage (not merely with usury), extorts money, falsifies measure and weight—in one word, whosoever cheats—shall perish." There is in these recommendations absolutely no difference made between a Jew and non-Jew. In the same *Book of the Pious*, it is said further on as follows:—"If somebody asks to borrow money, be it a Jew or a non-Jew, and you are not willing to lend him money for fear of losing it, you must not say that you have no money, if it is not true."

Unfortunately people did not all read ethical books, since the chief point of learning in the German schools consisted in Talmudic hair-splitting discussions (לְפָנֶים) and cabballistical speculations. Indeed most of the sermons preached up to the beginning of this century (and even now it is sometimes the case) consisted of such matter.

All this is laid down by Dr. Güdemann in his very interesting preface, together with the bibliography of the documents he puts before the reader. They are classified as follows:—1. Documents written in Hebrew and German, of which the first is the will of Eliezer ben Isaac of Worms (1050), and the last that of R. Judah Loeb (1787), altogether pieces taken from fifty-one authors. This is followed by three appendices:—1. Opinions of non-German Jews on the Judaico-German culture and teaching; 2. Documents extracted from statutes of towns and Jewish congregations; here the Hebrew originals are translated into German; 3. The enumeration of school books used by the German Jews. Our author ends with some additional documents received when too late for insertion in their place, and with detailed indexes; we miss, however, the table of contents, by which the reader could easily learn which writers are quoted.

If the documents are not always interesting and learned (there are, indeed, many repetitious) it is not our author's fault, since no others exist which would be more readable. And we must take into consideration that the new historical school asks for the publication of the documents upon which history is based. Anyhow the thirty-two pages of Dr. Güdemann's introduction will satisfy readers who care more for style than for facts.

A. NEUBAUER.

### THE HAGADA AND THE MASS.

*The Lord's Supper and the Passover Ritual.* Translated from Prof. BICKELL'S *Messe und Pascha*, by W. F. SKENE, D.C.L.

The *Origines Judaicæ* of Christianity are becoming more and more extended of late years. The researches of Dr. Taylor have established the fact that *The Teaching of the XII. Apostles*, one of the earliest and most instructive of Christian documents, is in its early part merely an adaptation of the earliest Jewish catechism known as *The Two Paths*. Fischer has shown, conclusively to most minds, that the last book of the New Testament, known as the "Revelation of St. John," is merely a Jewish apocalypse with a few Christian interpolations. The works of Lightfoot, Schottgen, and Wünsche have shown how little of the sayings of the founder of Christianity cannot